

REMARKS

The Office Action of March 13, 2003 rejected claims 1-35. By this paper, claim 2, 3, 14 and 18-23 have been canceled. Accordingly, claims 1, 4-13, 15-17 and 24-35 are pending. Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration of the pending claims in view of the amendments made herein.

The Office Action rejected claims 1-35 under the judicially created doctrine of double patenting over claims 1-27 of U.S. Patent 6,341,265. The Office Action also rejected claims 1, 2, 5-13 and 15-23 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,208,973 to Boyer et al. Claim 23 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112 as being indefinite. The Office Action also stated that claims 24-35 would be allowable and that claims 3, 4 and 14 would be merely objected to if the non-statutory double patenting rejection is overcome.

Applicants have filed a terminal disclaimer herewith to overcome the double patenting rejection. In view of this terminal disclaimer, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 24-35 are now in condition for allowance.

In order to facilitate early allowance of the patent application and to resolve all issues raised in the Office Action, the claim 1 and 13 have been amended to include the limitations of dependent claims that were objected to in the Office Action. Independent claim 1 has been amended by this paper to incorporate the limitations of claim 3 and any base claims (i.e., claim 2). Similarly, independent claim 13 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 14. Thus, claims 1 and 13 represent the rewritten form of two of the dependent claims that were objected to in the Office Action and, for this reason, claims 1 and 13 are in condition for allowance. The other pending claims that were originally rejected, namely, claims 5-12 and 15-

17, now depend from an allowable independent claim and are in condition for allowance for at least this reason.

Claims 1 and 13 have been rewritten by this paper in order to facilitate early allowance, and this amendment should not be seen as a concession that claims 1, 2, 5-13 and 15-17 as originally filed are anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,208,973 to Boyer et al. Similarly, claims 18-23 have been canceled by this paper to enable the claims that have already been identified by the Examiner as being patentable to be promptly allowed, and this cancellation should not be seen as a concession that claims 18-23 as originally filed are anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,208,973 to Boyer et al. Applicants reserve the right to address the substantive issues regarding the rejection of these claims by way of a continuation application that may be filed at a future date.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1, 4-13, 15-17 and 24-35 are in condition for allowance. In the event that the Examiner finds remaining impediments to a prompt allowance of this application that may be clarified through a telephone interview, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney.

Dated this 8th day of April, 2003.

Respectfully submitted,



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